

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-11

AID-05 ACDA-05 OMB-01 /078 W
----- 106017

R 120825Z MAR 76
FM AMCONSUL NAHA
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
SECSTATE WASHDC 2031
INFO COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA
USARJ CAMP ZAMA
5TH AF YOKOTA
COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA
USAGO MACHINATO
313TH AD/18 TFW CC KADENA
MARCORB CAMP BUTLER
OAC CAMP BUTLER
OAFB CAMP BUTLER
COMFLEACTS OKINAWA
FBIS OKINAWA
CINCPAC

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CICPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

PAGE2 RHAIBQA3903 C O N F I D E N T I A L

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: MARR, JA

SUBJECT: PRESS CONTINUES FOCUS ON IE SHIMA BOMBING RANGE

REF: NAHA 082 (DTG 250731Z FEB 76)

SUMMARY: IE SHIMA BOMBING RANGE CONTINUES RECEIVE MAJOR ATTENTION
FROM OKINAWAN NEWS MEDIA WHICH PLAYS UP RELOCATION ISSUE, NOISE
PROBLEM, NIGHTTIME USE OF RANGE AND MOST RECENTLY INCIDENT ON
MARCH 9 IN WHICH NO ONE WAS INJURED. END SUMMARY.

1. IE SHIMA BOMBING RANGE HAS CONTINUED TO RECEIVE MORE FREQUENT

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AND MAJOR ATTENTION FROM NEWS MEDIA, SOMETIMES ON DAILY BASIS, THAN

ANY OTHER SINGLE U.S. MILITARY BASE-RELATED SUBJECT.

2. MOST RECENTLY , PRESS PLAYED UP INCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED MARCH 9 WHEN AN A-4 (SKYHAWK) FROM VMA 211 ATTEMPTED TO DROP A JET-ASSIST CANNISTER IN THE TARGET ZONE AT IE SHIMA BOMBING RANGE. THE CANNISTER RELEASE MALFUNCTIONED MOMENTARILY RESULTING IN THE CANNISTER'S FALLING INTO A SUGARCANE FIELD CAUSING APPROXIMATELY 6000 YEN DAMAGE. THE POINT OF IMPACT WAS 600 YARDS WITHIN THE IE SHIMA RANGE BOUNDARY. ALTHOUGH NO ONE WAS INJURED , PRESS HAS USED INCIDENT TO CONTINUE ITS STRESS ON GENERAL THEME OF POTENTIAL DANGER POSED BY BOMBING RANGE TO IE SHIMA INHABITANTS.

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3. PRESS ON MARCH 11 CARRIED FULL TEXT OF PROTEST STATEMENT FILED WITH CONGEN BY LOCAL COMMUNIST PARTY. ON MARCH 12 PRESS REPORTED PROTEST MADE BY REFORMIST DIETMEMBER KYAN TO DFAA DIRGEN SAITO AND OKINAWA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY DIRGEN UEKI UNDER HEADLINE"DIRGEN UEKI PROMISED TO FILE PROTEST WITH U.S. FORCES AGAINST DROPPING ACCIDENT". (ARTICL ITSELF SIMPLY REPORTED UEKI AS TELLING KYAN THAT HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED A REPORT AND WAS NO FULLY INFORMED ON INCIDENT BUT PROMISING THAT APPROPRIATE STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN AFTER PROBING INTO CAUSE OF ACCIDENT.) EMOTIONAL TONE OF MUCH OF MEDIA COVERAGE IN RECENT WEEKS EXEMPLIFIED BY MARCH 11 RYUKYU SHIMPO COMMENTARY ENTITLED "BATTLEGROUND LIFE ON IE SHIMA."

4. EARLIER ON FEB 27 LOCAL PRESS REPORTED UEKI AS TELLING NEWSMEN THAT U.S. HAD AGREED THAT US-JAPAN JOINT COMMITTEE WOULD OFFICIALLY TAKE UP IE SHIMA QUESTION INCLUDING NOISE PROBLEM WHICH WOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY CONSIDERATION. PRESS HAS GIVEN CONFLICTING PICTURE OF STATUS OF BOMBING RANGE RELOCATION QUESTION WITH SOME REPORTS THAT DECISION ALREADY TAKEN TO RELOCATE RANGE ON IRISUNAJIMA AND OTHER REPORTS ATTRIBUTED TO GOJ OFFICIALS WHICH EMPHASIZE DIFFICULTY OF FINDING ALTERNATIVE LOCATION IN OKINAWA FOR IE SHIMA RANGE.

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5. LOCAL PRESS COVERAGE AND GOJ OFFICIALS' STATEMENTS REPORTED HERE HAVE FOCUSED PARTICULARLY ON U.S. FORCES USE OF BOMBING RANGE AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NIGHT. LOCAL HEAD OF OKINAWA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, IN RECENT CONVERSATION WITH CONGEN, ACKNOWLEDGED U.S. FORCES' REQUIREMENTS FOR USE OF RANGE AND DIFFICULTY OF RESOLVING RELOCATION QUESTION AT EARLY DATE. HE EXPRESSED OPINION , HOWEVER , THAT UNFAVORABLE OKINAWAN ATTITUDES BEING GENERATED BY MEDIA COVERAGE COULD BE SUBSTANTIALY REDUCED IF U.S. FORCES COULD FIND IT POSSIBLE TO TERMINATE THEIR NIGHTTIME USE OF RANGE AN HOUR OR TWO EARLIER THAN AT PRESENT. HE REFLECTED IMPRESSION BEING GIVEN BY PRESS AND REPORTEDLY BY UEKI THAT RANGE IS

BEING USED UP UNTIL 11:99 P.M. AT NIGHT, WHICH IS NOT THE CASE. IN
FACT, CONGEN IS ADVISED THAT RANGE IS SELDOM USED AS LATE AS 10:00
P.M.
KNOWLES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, IE SHIMA, MILITARY BASES, MISSILE RANGES
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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ISecure: 1
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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